

CHARACTERISTICS OF SCHOOL AGE CHILDREN

6-7 YEAR OLDS:

- Are very active
- Although less responsive to adult requests, still want to please
- Respond well to praise
- Sensitive and easily embarrassed
- Enjoy friends but will often choose to play alone
- Hate losing and may “bend” the rules
- Tend to exaggerate

THEY LIKE OR NEED:

- Science activities that encourage exploration, discovery and an understanding of cause and effect
- Team games, which encourage group participation
- Performing arts activities that allow them to come to become activity involved and become aware of story lines and plots
- Nutrition and health activities that help them to understand how the body functions and how nutrition affects health
- Cooking activities that involve measuring, science, and cooking techniques
- Arts and crafts activities that use a wide variety of art media
- Make believe and dramatic play activities
- Repetition (routines are important)
- To explore and examine by taking things apart and putting them back together again
- To collect and sort things (i.e. shells, baseball cards, rocks, etc.)
- To tell and hear stories
- To produce finished products

8-10 YEAR OLDS:

- Are very active
- May be arrogant (rude)
- Are sensitive about being told what to do
- Are more selective in their choices of friends
- Dislike playing alone
- Can make decisions
- Are embarrassed by public praise
- Strongly react to things that are unfair
- Can begin to reason
- Are more cooperative when included in making plans

- Understand right and wrong and are trying to develop standards of acceptable play
- Have longer interest spans
- Are concerned about obeying rules

THEY LIKE OR NEED:

- To actively participate in sports and clinics
- To participate in clubs or hobbies
- To work on projects that broaden their knowledge of the world
- To exercise and improve their physical fitness
- Games with clear and specific rules
- Competitive team games
- Activities that involve manual dexterity and fine muscle coordination such as carpentry, macramé, jewelry making, ceramics
- “Run around” play
- To swap or trade articles
- To know about the distant past
- To improve their skills and competencies
- Group games and activities involving others
- To be involved in activities with friends (it’s often more important who they are with than what they are doing)
- To identify with own sex and age group

10-12 YEAR OLDS:

- Peers set standards for behavior
- Seek information about gender by peers
- Perform rigidly to role assigned by peers
- Team games increasingly important
- Very self-conscious about how they look
- Boys and girls interests become divergent
- Develop crushes and hero worship (puts a lot of pressure on adult leaders, caregivers)
- Often self-conscious/may become boisterous to cover anxiety
- Faced with decisions regarding sex/drugs/alcohol
- Many lack self-confidence
- Overly concerned with what others think
- May be moody
- Seeking self-identity and may be rebellious
- Sensitive to fairness of adults
- Need encouragement to pursue special interests

- Are capable of organized, competitive and adventurous, even to the risk of putting themselves in danger
- Can think logically, acting is another story...
- Can consider more than one solution to a problem

Source: Greater Burlington YMCA

Last updated: 4/29/2008